crafts) have been implementing various schemes which include: training, marketing development, survey and studies, design and technical upgradation, setting up of crafts development centres, exhibition etc. Besides, three central level corporations namely (1) Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India Ltd (CCIC) (ii) Handicrafts and Handloom Export Corporation (HHEC), New Delhi and (iii) North Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation Ltd. Shillong. undertake various activities for the development and marketing of handicrafts in the country. For boosting exports, two export promotion councils, i.e., Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) and Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) have also been set up by the Government.

Under the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) activities have been under-taken to promote and develop Metal, Jute and Wood based handicrafts in the country.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. To promote handicrafts in the country, following incentives are being provided to the rural artisans.

(i) In recognition of the traditional craftskill of the rural artisans, National Awards and Merit Certificate are given every year to mastercrafts persons and weavers.

(ii) The winner of National Award and merit certificates are encouragad to participate in different festival| melas organised abroad and within the country.

(iii) In order to sell their products directly to customers artisans are being encouraged by giving TA|DA etc. to participate in different exhibitions melas|festivals|craft bazars etc.

(iv) Permanent Urban Haats like "Delhi Haat" have been opened to provide opportunities to crafts people to sell their goods round the year.

(v) To live and work in a decent environment three welfare schemes viz: workshed-cum-housing, group insurance and health insurance are being operated.

(vi) Under the rural development programme Government is providing improved modern tools to rural artisans including craftspersons at highly subsidised priced.

(e) Does not arise.

Textile Exports

141. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any export target in US billion dollars has been set for the textiles sector during the year 1995-96 as compared to last two years;

(b) if so, the detail thereof, sector-wise with increase in percentage as compared to last two years; and

(c) what steps Government have recently initiated to boost exports in the textiles sector during 1995-96 and 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTITLES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) and (b) Government have not fixed any target for the export of textiles sector during 1995-96 so far.

(c) In order to step up exports of textiles Government have taken a number of steps, which include encouraging exporters to participate in buyer-seller meets, fairs and exhibitions; enabling import of capital goods at concessional duty for export production; special arrangements for duty-free import of raw materials for export production; ensuring increased availability of export credit etc.

Demand and production of cotton in Tamil Nadu

142. SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state: